

State Site Cleanup Programs and Brownfields

All of the categories of sites where DTSC is involved with site investigation or cleanup (i.e. State Superfund, Voluntary Cleanup Program Sites, School Sites, etc.) include properties which fit the broad federal definition of Brownfields. Because of the very broad nature of the over-arching Brownfields definition, DTSC has not developed a specific list of Brownfield sites. In general, federal law (the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act – <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/html-doc/hr2869.htm>) defines a “Brownfield Site” as “real property, the expansion, redevelopment or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.” The federal law then lists specific categories of sites that are excluded from participation in specific federal programs that provide grant and loan funding for qualifying properties. Similarly, a number of California laws contain specific limitations regarding the types of property owners and the types of properties that are eligible for specific programs that target Brownfield sites (such as the Cleanup Loans and Environmental Assistance to Neighborhoods (CLEAN) Loan Program or the California Land Reuse and Revitalization Act).

If you are trying to determine site eligibility for specific programs or services, the enabling statutes for those programs or services should be consulted. In general, the category “Voluntary Cleanup Sites” may contain more sites that are eligible for various Brownfield programs and services, because for these sites no administrative or judicial enforcement action has been taken to compel site investigation or cleanup. Historically, information regarding redevelopment and reuse plans for properties has not typically been included in DTSC’s site database. In the future, such information will be included where available and this aspect of the data will improve as time and resources allow.

DTSC staff can assist you with questions regarding the eligibility criteria for various Brownfield programs and services (<http://dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Brownfields/contacts.cfm>). DTSC can also assist you with general questions about the site data contained in EnviroStor by contacting our helpdesk at (916) 323-3400 or envirostor@dtsc.ca.gov.